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S E C R E T SAN SALVADOR 000316

NOFORN

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PINR](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ES](#)
SUBJECT: 2009 SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS (C-AL9-00153)

REF: STATE 20677 (NOTAL)

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (S/NF) Summary: (Center-right, pro-U.S.) Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) President Elias Antonio (Tony) Saca and (left-wing) Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) President-elect Mauricio Funes both plan to attend the April 17-19 Summit of the Americas (SOA) in Trinidad and Tobago. Both hope to meet with President Obama. The issues most likely to be raised by the GOES are the global economic concerns and the future of Temporary Protective Status (TPS). They have no apparent plans to antagonize or upstage the U.S. The paragraph numbers below correspond to those of the reftel questions. End Summary.

¶2. (S/NF) President Saca and President-elect Funes will both attend the Summit, and both would like to meet with President Obama. The Minister of Foreign Affairs told us April 2 that the Central American presidents will request a group meeting with President Obama. President-elect Funes would attend this meeting. Saca and Funes also plan to meet with CODEL Engel on the margins of the SOA. Some of the issues that the GOES is likely to raise are the future of TPS and remittances from Salvadorans living in the U.S. The GOES has no apparent plans to upstage or publicly debate President Obama. The participants are likely to join the collective expressions of concern over the global economic crisis and U.S. immigration policy. The GOES has consistently opposed the U.S. embargo of Cuba, but is unlikely to raise the issue if others do not.

¶3. (S/NF) To our knowledge, the Salvadoran leaders have no plans to deliberately sabotage or undercut the Summit process.

¶4. (S/NF) Should Venezuelan President Chavez try to force a controversial agenda item or antagonize the U.S. delegation, GOES participants are unlikely to join in. President Saca) - who will still be the Salvadoran President -- firmly opposes Chavez, and President-elect Funes has tried to distance himself publicly from Chavez as much as possible, even while more radical members of the FMLN are Chavez allies. However, it will be important to note Funes' reactions and body language if and when Chavez attempts to stir up trouble.

¶5. (S/NF) The GOES has no plans to use the Summit process to propose or advance reforms that would undermine the independence and autonomy of the Inter-American human rights system.

¶6. (S/NF) Neither Saca nor Funes plans to take a disruptive stance at the Summit. The Saca administration is looking for recognition of its longstanding friendship with the United States, and the incoming Funes contingent is working toward a smooth transfer of power. Funes' camp has told us repeatedly

that it values El Salvador's strong relationship with the U.S., and hopes to continue a cooperative dialogue. We recommend balancing praise for Saca and his party for building a functioning democracy and participating in CAFTA with a straight-forward expression of our intention to build a strong partnership with Funes and company.

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